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# KANSAS—SLAVERY—THE LECOMPTON CONSTITUTION.

## SPEECH

OF

HON. SIDNEY DEAN, OF CONNECTICUT.

Delivered in the House of Representatives, March 25th, 1858.

Mr. Chairman, I desire to submit a few remarks, which have been very hastily prepared. Such is the aggressive nature of Slavery, that it was the early policy of our Government to confine it within metes and bounds. Confessed by correct jurists of every age to be a creature of positive municipal law, in defiance of the laws of nature and of the laws of God, it was the deliberate judgment of the venerated sires of our revolutionary history, that it should sustain its existence—if existence it should have—by the statute laws of the independent States. While this policy was pursued, the people of the non-slaveholding States washed their hands in innocence of this (to them) crime against the laws of God and the rights of man. Hedged in by State sovereignty, it was as clearly beyond the jurisdiction of the other States, as though it were a foreign Government in some island of the sea. When the man was transformed into a chattel, a brute, a *thing*, by the law of force, or, what is its equivalent, a statute law embodying the power of a sovereign State, he could do no less than submit to the prisoner's chain, unless by a successful revolution he emancipated himself. But when he passed the barriers of that law, then by the higher law of nature and of God his chains of servitude fell off, and he walked the earth a freeman. I understand this to have been the settled doctrine of the country until a very recent period.

In the instrument which confederated the thirteen States, and made them an empire of sovereignties, a single clause was admitted, providing for the rendition of *persons* who should, by

flight, defraud others of labor or service which was their rightful due. Beyond this single point, tortured of late into an implied power in one man to claim another as a slave upon soil foreign to his State, the Constitution is silent, and guiltless of the barbarous and unchristian doctrine that one man can rightfully chattelize another. Like the several free-State sovereignties, it stood, with the Declaration of Independence, the embodiment of the doctrine of universal Freedom, the practical expounder of the great, primal, God-given, "self-evident truth, that all men were created free and equal," having an impartial endowment of rights. These were asserted to be the glorious trinity—life, *liberty*, and the pursuit of that happiness which is the desire of all.

Such, sir, from the nature of those instruments, and from cotemporaneous testimony, I understand to be the great principles which underlie our system of government. The people of my State, sir, hold those views to-day. Taught them by their revolutionary sires, and by that written history of the country with which almost every youth among us is as familiar as is any gentleman upon this floor, they cherish them, and will abide by them. Anti-Slavery they are; Anti-Slavery they glory in being; unbought by the offers of political sycophants, unsullied by the seductions of cotton and commerce, and the wealth which they impart; uninfluenced by the crazy threats of fratricidal fanatics who proclaim disunion, or unsubdued by any fear.

Sir, my constituents, and the State which I have the pride of representing in part, ask noth-

ing more of their sister sovereignties, than that they abide by the terms of the original compact. Their history is a life-long pledge of their fealty to it. But with the crazy scheme of the Slavery-extendors of this day they have no sympathy, and to the doctrine they will grant no quarter. They have from time to time acquiesced in those compromise measures which have been adopted, with the expectation that each one was to be the *last*. When the black tide of Slavery has thrown another and still another surge far up upon the free shore of our confederated dominion, they have protested against the sacrilege in language becoming to freemen, and demanded a cessation of these attacks. But when the leading spirits of the nation have, through expediency, proposed a mutual yielding, in order to give a common repose, the citizens of my State have been the first to acquiesce, while at the same time they changed not, in a single iota, their views of the nature of this evil, or its true municipal position in this country. No single step has been taken in this aggressive march of Slavery towards a national existence, or the founding of an empire whose base should be the bowed necks and crushed souls of men whom God made a portion of the human brotherhood, which has not met the stern, opposing judgment and conscience of my constituents. Loving Freedom at the first, they broke every manacle within the State. Before you can force them into an acknowledgment of its existence there, you must turn the army of a Xerxes upon them, and crush the wall of human hearts, which, flying from the cottages and palaces within its borders, will close up in solid column for the defence of their sovereign rights. Sir, man-stealing is a crime of magnitude in our State. Even the making of a claim to the possession of another human body, containing a living soul, subjects the claimant to arrest and trial under our statute. Such is the love of liberty and the sense of equal justice in the bosoms of our people. I esteem it one of the proudest acts of my life, that by the suffrages of my own townsmen I was enabled, by my vote in the Legislature, to give that spirit vitality in a statute law; and that, too, because, in common with my fellow-citizens, I believe that the rights of all men are the gift of God, and the claims of property are not to be mentioned in the same breath.

Sir, when the Convention which framed our Federal Constitution had under advisement that portion of the report of the committee of detail which recommended a tax upon the importation of certain *persons*, (meaning slaves,) one of the brightest lights of our State—whose legal power was second to none in the country—of whose name and fame every son of Connecticut is proud, arose in his place in opposition to the measure, simply upon the ground "*that it implied they were property.*" Not that it was asserted in the provision, but simply that it might thereafter be *implied*. Who, sir,

rises up to convict the pure-hearted, clear-headed Roger Sherman, in these utterances of the sentiments of the people of our State, so long ago as 1787? When, in the furtherance of the mad schemes of Slavery propagandists, in 1814, the broad acres of the Louisiana purchase were devoted to chattel servitude, and when, in 1819, the peninsula of Florida was added as a *slave* State to our Confederation, the people of Connecticut stood in opposition. And in the exciting scenes which convulsed the country, over the admission of Missouri as a slave State, and which finally culminated in what was supposed to be a permanent barrier to the extension of Slavery northward, the citizens of my State, were not second in their hostility to this scheme for the extension of the slave system, even though a hunker portion of their Representatives upon this floor betrayed their principles. When Slavery rested temporarily from "its goings to and fro" in the country, seeking an avenue for extension, and assailed the sacred right of petition in these Halls, from 1835 to 1838, my constituents were no indifferent spectators of that great struggle. And when the same power, under the "gag resolutions," brought "the venerable sage of Quincy" to the bar of this House for the presentation of a petition, the slumbering spirit of even our staid conservatives was aroused.

In 1841 you opened up the propagandist scheme afresh, and expended millions of the money of the people to take "The Lone Star Republic" into the bosom of the Confederacy; providing that from this prolific political womb should be born, at times suitable for the future emergencies which might arise in the Slavery-extending scheme, four slaveholding sovereignties. Did Connecticut tamely and silently acquiesce in this wholesale barter of those principles enunciated by Roger Sherman and his compeers of the Constitutional Convention? She has a history upon that transaction, and it is written.

In 1850 you enacted a man-hunting, heaven-defying law, which abrogated the Divine precept, "to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and shelter the oppressed;" turned every acre of our land into a Federal hunting ground for men; made our citizens bloodhounds by law to reclaim captives, under the pains and penalties of a forfeiture of our hard-earned property and imprisonment in a felon's cell. Did we bow and cringe and swear allegiance in the loss of our principles and manhood? Sir, you cannot get a corporal's guard in the whole State to enforce the edict, not even of that so-called Democratic conservative portion of our citizens who swear by James Buchanan and the Leecompton Constitution, the Federal patronage of course included. You but stirred up our yeomanry to the contemplation of how they could best preserve their sovereignty as a State, and their rights as individuals, against the aggressions of that Slavery propagandism which

then, as it has since, held complete control over the general Administration. The action of the two great national Conventions, ignoring all discussion of a question which involved our dearest rights, and promising, by all the force of party machinery, "to crush out" discussion, buried in a sepulchre too deep for the ghost of a chance of resurrection, the old Whig party in the State, and passed the Democratic party, its opponent, through the damp vaults leading to its final sepulchre—hanging a dark and murky pall over its prospects of ever becoming a victorious political organization there, unless by a division of the Anti-Slavery forces upon local questions. The repeal of the Missouri restriction—the prolific dam of this whole brood of villainies against the people of Kansas, from Atchison's invasion to the consummation of the scheme in the presentation of the Pro-Slavery Lecompton instrument, has decimated the already broken ranks of the Administration party in the State. The Dred Scott decision of the Supreme Judicial bench of the country has shown them that even the sanctity of our highest judicial seat has been invaded by this rabid spirit of Slavery extension, and that the robe of the judge is no proof against the partisan madness of the day.

Sir, the people of Connecticut are not slaves, nor the sons of slaves. They are not vassals of the South, nor the children of vassals. They are, as a body, legitimate in descent from the Pilgrims of Plymouth, and glory in their Puritan character and ancestry. Their early laws recognised, and were based upon, those Divine precepts which they believed and practiced. Their code of statutory obligations, from the founding of their first colony down to the present time, will gather fresh lustre by a comparison with the contemporaneous code of any other colony or country. She will blush for the weakness of a son of hers who, in the presence of the nation's Representatives, asserts as fact what has no foundation in her legal history, but was the jeer of the infidel, in consequence of her Puritan character. I allude, sir, to that remarkable feature in the speech of my colleague from the fourth district, [Mr. Bishop,] asserting the former existence of a fabulous law, and passing in review the statutes of our State against the violations of the moral law, to excite the jeers and laughter of Representatives whom it would not injure to be brought under their restraining influence. Sir, we have a "Sabbath law," a "gambling law," a law against "profanity," and a Connecticut "liquor law," with their pains and penalties. The atmosphere of this corrupt Federal city would be much purer, if those laws were a portion of the code of this District, and had Connecticut men to enforce them. We have also a law against "bearing false witness," or slander; and I much mistake the spirit of the citizens of my colleague's district, if they do not enter up the judgment of an overwhelming majority

against him in the election which is to come.

Sir, a majority of the citizens of my State occupy that happy social position which is a medium between a wealthy aristocracy on the one hand, and a poverty which is generally wedded to ignorance, upon the other. Our farmers cultivate their limited acres; our artisans and mechanics, by their intelligence and skill, always find employment at a remunerative compensation, unless the fountain of labor dries up; our merchants are second to none in the commerce chambers of the country; and our "schoolmasters are always abroad." There are but few who do not acquire a sufficiency of wealth to educate their sons and daughters for any walk of life which they select, and to grant them sufficient assistance with which to commence their career. The result is, they are virtuous; for, as a general rule, the idlers are the vicious ones of a community. They are intelligent, and thoroughly posted in all the principles, history, and present operations of our Government. They are political thinkers from their youth. What passes in these halls, what is spoken in debate here, is read in their daily papers, and commented upon at their evening firesides. With such a people for a constituency—acknowledging the dignity and rights of labor, scorning the coarse taunts uttered against them, and loathing the system which holds a fellow laborer in the most abject vassalage, as a chattel, a thing, hurling back in your teeth the *pronunciamiento* which seeks to debase and degrade them—I do not wonder that the small remnant of your slave-extending party in Connecticut lifts up its prayer that you cease the utterance of such comparisons and such slanders, for its very existence sake.

I counsel no such silence. No party good, no party existence, shall ever humiliate me enough to ask the South, or any section or party, to play the hypocrite in order to sustain my political life. If the spirit of aristocracy is in the South; if, in its narrow judgment, the great laboring class of the North is yoked with the abject servitude of the slaves of the South, to form "the mud-sills" of our political edifice, out with it, then, with all that openness of character with which you are accredited! You will soon find these despised "mud-sills" of the North rising up your peers, and towering above you in the future history of this Government, even now being regenerated by their awakening.

Sir, my colleague may speak for the party, when he beseeches his Southern allies to believe what they please, but to keep their counsel from the Northern public ear. I speak for the people, when I ask you to make a clean breast of your views and designs. As reasoners, if they cannot answer your sophistries; as politicians, if they cannot go as deep as the profoundest of you in the science of government; as readers of our own history, if they cannot rebut and overthrow your assumptions concerning the nature and extent of the powers of our

federative Government; then, sir, they will, in the spirit of a true manhood, take their seats at your feet as pupils. But, sir, you can never blot out their hatred to Slavery, or seduce them into crediting its morality and beneficence as a system. Born upon free soil, inhaling a free air, educated in free schools, and taught a free gospel, it is beyond any earthly power to make them love the system of a forced servitude, much more submit to the dictum of its masters. If the working-men of Connecticut were the only slaves in this Confederacy, it would be annihilated in a few short hours by a revolution which would be decisive and final.

Sir, it is true that we have a term of political reproach in use among us which is significant, and utters its own meaning when pronounced. A "doughface" is peculiar to Northern latitudes. The race has flourished somewhat extensively in the past, but at present "is growing small by degrees, and beautifully less." Our citizens may entertain great respect for a man born upon a Southern plantation, and reared amid the influences of the chattel system, taught in infancy, and strengthened in his rising manhood, in the belief that it is the best social system for all communities; taught to demand even its acknowledgment as an equal to a free system. I say, our people may entertain a great respect for such a man, but none at all for his principles upon that question. But they have small respect, and instinctively inquire for a *cause* when a son of their State, or of the North, becomes plastic, and susceptible of being moulded into the image and likeness of a Southern partisan chattel in the political market. Such seem to take the name of "doughface," as you would take an epidemic disease—that is, "in the natural way." I do not deny but some honest men, who honestly entertain opinions favorable to the expansion of the slave system—who see in "King Cotton" the pride and glory as well as the saviour of their country, may have this badge applied to them unjustly. But it is their misfortune, and they must wait until the final judgment exposes their motives, when they will certainly be righted. It is a compound word, of such significance in its application, that it will be hard to crowd it out of the Northern political vocabulary while a single case of applicability remains.

My colleague admits that the Democracy of Connecticut "accord to the South the right to 'move into the Territories of the United States, 'with their property whenever and wherever they please, so long as they are Territories.'" (I quote his language,) and then coolly asserts, in the face of history, that this was one of "the compromises of the Constitution!" Sir, he has studied that instrument, and the history of the Convention which framed it, to little purpose, if he has not yet learned that the claimed rights, nay, more, the legal existence of Slavery under that Constitution, were denied a place in the instrument. He would have been correct, had

he stated that it was one of the late compromises of the boasted National Democratic party. He may be pardoned if, like many of his political friends, he esteems the Pro-Slavery Democratic Platform his own and his party's Constitution. But the people of Connecticut do not accord that right, either by an interpolation of our national charter or at the dictum of party leaders.

Sir, the Democratic party of my State has furnished its full quota of doughfaces to aid this system of slave propagandism. In times of high party excitement over local questions, they have thrown a crop of this political seed to the surface; but almost invariably it has been with the protestations of opposition to Slavery extension, rolling like oil from their tongues. When the repeal of the Missouri restriction was consummated, many of its prominent men were staggered, and a majority of its representation upon this floor recorded their votes against it; but they soon succumbed to Southern dictation, and took their old places in the ranks. But they have persistently deceived their people in relation to their true position upon this question. Their political pettifoggers, in the last Presidential election, made flaming appeals to the Democracy to sustain "Buchanan, Breckinridge, and *Free Kansas*," under the workings of this new light of the party, named "popular sovereignty." They coolly argued, that under the new system, Slavery had met its last foe, had occupied its last inch of virgin soil in this country, and that the national Democracy had effectually checked its advancing tide. That was the local doctrine fitted for the latitude of Connecticut, and the campaign in which it was used. Now that "Buchanan, Breckinridge, and *Free Kansas*," has culminated in "*Lecompton*," and in forcing the system of Slavery upon a people contrary to their will, my colleague, speaking for the party which he represents, coolly proclaims that "they concede the right to the South to move into the Territories of the United States *with their property, (i. e., slaves.) whenever and wherever* they please, so long as they are Territories," but most pitifully begs, as a boon in return, that the South shall not institute unhealthy comparisons between their chattel slaves and the free mechanics of the North, to prove that they occupy the same social and relative position in political society. Further than this, he entreats them to cease attempting to prove that it is a Divine system, for it really hurts the feelings of the party in Connecticut.

The Democratic press of my State is completely under the control of this Pro-Slavery Administration, without a single exception of which I am aware. Every publisher or editor has one of the tents of the national udder between his lips, and, with his mouth full of the golden milk of Executive patronage, pitifully means the request to his Southern brethren, to suppress the common sentiment held between

them for the party's sake. The proposition of my colleague for the extinction of Slavery in the Territory of Kansas, by the purchase of the slaves taken there under this Democratic doctrine, is perfectly consistent with those commerce principles which admit the right of traffic in human flesh, and which characterize the bunker portion of that party. It is the utterance of a doctrine, and the recommendation of a "speculation," so cold-blooded and godless in its character, that it will shock the religious portion of his State; while among the infidels it will, as it did here, provoke laughter under the very ribs of the moral death which it proclaims.

I sicken, sir, over the recital of those outrages against Freedom which have characterized the so-called Democratic party. The child has changed its nature as a chameleon does its hues, and having become, if not black, at least tawny in color, should receive a new christening. Whatever measure it proposes, whatever act it performs, or whatever platform its changing necessities require it to inaugurate, in all these "the nigger" is prominent. Asserting that "the slave has no rights which a white man is bound to respect," it still insists that the slave system shall be the head and front, the Alpha and Omega of party allegiance and constitutional obligation. When the President of the United States stooped from his high position, and entered the partisan arena to attempt a public answer to a modest petition from some of the first citizens of my State, he acted consistently, judging him by the measures of the modern Democracy. Sir, the doctrine of political ethics taught in that ancient and world-renowned *Alma Mater*, in New Haven, does not tally with the bald assumptions of the political Hotspurs of to-day. Her learned professors are of the school of the Shermans, the Wolcotts, and Dwigths; and the partisan fulminations of the President fell harmlessly at the feet of the noble men whom God yet permits to linger under the shadows of her venerated walls. The party of the President in my State gathered no converts to their faith from that Presidential tilt with those honored citizens.

Mr. Chairman, I have felt it due to myself and my constituents to say this much in explanation of their true character, social position, and political opinions upon the Slavery question. I had determined with myself not to occupy the time of the House, but to pronounce my own as well as their judgment upon that feature of Slavery extension now under the consideration of Congress, in a negative vote upon every phase which it should assume. I have no desire to rehearse the catalogue of invasions and frauds practiced against the people of Kansas Territory. Neither have I the taste to dissect so foul a mass of political corruption as was, in my opinion, embodied in that Lecompton Convention. For the same reason, I do not desire to analyze the child that partakes so

largely the paternal nature and character. Other and abler hands have done it; and, in my opinion, most successfully. On the face of the whole proceedings, from the first invasion downwards, it is marked with violence, fraud, and a Pro-Slavery fanaticism almost insane. Its leaders and abettors have been men high in authority, and blood-red murders have followed its serpentine trail. Its consummation has come to be a party test, and its legal crowning will be a blow which will drive that party staggering to its political death.

During the recess of Congress I visited the Territory, conversed with its citizens, and gathered up as much of its unwritten history as circumstances permitted. It harmonizes with the record already upon the page of history and before the country. I stood by the row of graves in the open field, on the summit of the hill which overlooks the city of Lawrence, and from a resident learned the history of this column of sleeping martyrs. History may be ransacked in vain to find a parallel of brutality, savage hate, and fiendish malignity, which brought these men to their bloody graves. If "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church," then the blood of freemen is not lost when it is yielded up to establish free institutions. If the strong influence of this Administration, and the force of party discipline, shall place this Constitution as a yoke upon the necks of a subdued people, I still shall have confidence that the sons of revolutionary sires will have enough of their fathers' spirit to emancipate themselves, and found for themselves a domain of Freedom, peaceably if they can—forcibly, if that is the only alternative. The arbitrament of war is a court of last appeal, and should not be tried until the hope of a peaceful revolution has exhausted itself. When that crisis is reached, the people must decide to be slaves of freemen.

Mr. Chairman, before closing, I wish briefly to assign the reasons why I shall cast my vote against every step which looks to the consummation of this fraud.

In the first place, reflecting the sentiments of my constituents, I will not vote to admit a single inch of slave territory lying within the limits covered by the Missouri restriction of 1820. Its abrogation was in bad faith, and was designed, to say no more, to render possible what had solemnly been adjudged, and for a long series of years acquiesced in, as impossible. I have no faith—had none—in the catchphrase of "popular sovereignty" with which that measure was gilded, in order to screen the possibility or the purpose beneath it. It was asserted by our coolest men, at the time of the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska act, that the repeal of the Missouri restriction would result in the formation of a slave State within the limits from which the restriction was removed. Their prediction finds a fulfilment. It comes here with a slave Constitution, in spite of the

dogma of "popular sovereignty," and a majority of ten thousand votes of its citizens cast against it. But, sir, if every man in the Territory desired its admission with Slavery, under the position which I have assumed, I could not, and would not, vote in its favor.

Another reason for its rejection would be found in the frauds connected with the formation of the Constitution presented, even though the first could be waived. Why, sir, if testimony is to be credited—and Democratic Governors and Secretaries join in concurrence with the other proof spread before the face of the people—then this instrument is unworthy the respectful attention of the Congress of a free country, and should be kicked lustily from these Halls. If saved at all, it must be by technicalities and special pleading. An instrument of this nature, which is to determine the political and social complexion of a sovereign State, should not be saved merely because it was able to pass through such a gauntlet as this. We are not a petty court, sitting for the trial of a magre suit at law, to be governed by its petty technicalities, granting to the special pleader his verdict, in consequence of his ingenuity in shaping his case, or artfully and skillfully dodging the tough points of his opponent by legal quibbles. As the nation's tribunals, we are sitting in judgment on the legal birth of a new Commonwealth seeking to be added to this Confederacy. Standing upon the doctrine of popular sovereignty, and in the face of the ten thousand majority of its citizens against this Constitution, no Northern Democrat can, in my opinion, vote for this rejected instrument, and be true to his pledges to the people.

If the voice of the people is to be authoritative in the founding of new States out of the common domain, without the interposition of Congress, then it should bear their popular verdict of approval, clear as the sun at noonday. Sir, popular sovereignty does not weigh a feather in the balance, when opposed to the schemes of the slave propagandists of the day. They mean Slavery in Kansas, whether a majority of its citizens approve or disapprove. They mean two slave-State Senators in the other wing of the Capitol, for four and six years, respectively. All the irruptions of the Goths and Vandals of Missouri in the different elections; all the slaughter of Democratic Governors by the national Executive; the quartering of a Federal army within her borders; the refusal to enroll her citizens upon the poll-lists; the disfranchisement of nineteen counties in the pretended election for a Constitutional Convention; the creation of a peripatetic regent and supreme dictator, who holds the unannounced certificates of the late election for State officers in his breeches pocket; his absence from the Territory for months, and his hanging around the Federal city, and the reading of the author of the popular-sovereignty doctrine out of the pale of the party, because he cannot shut his eyes against this out-

rageous swindle—all, all, sir, make the grand design of the party and this Administration perfectly apparent. They mean a "nigger" in Kansas, or no Kansas in the Union. Popular sovereignty is well enough as a text upon which to predicate speeches to please the Northern Democratic ear; but when it rears a barrier against the extension of Slavery, it is to the South a bird of different plumage. It will be difficult for the people of the North to harmonize the pitiful pettifoggery of the friends of Leocompton to carry this measure, with the stern popular verdict of ten thousand majority of the sovereigns against it.

Still another reason for my opposition is found in the fact that it is not for the interest of my State to depart from the first inaugurated policy of our Government under the Constitution, to which I have so briefly alluded in my opening remarks. The danger to this Government lies in its strong tendency to centralization, federation, or too much central power. The Federal Government is of limited powers; and I will go as far as the furthest to give the sacred instrument of its existence a strict construction. Far beyond the most extensive speculations of our fathers has Executive patronage even now reached, in its rapidly-augmenting course. It is conceded by the country, that an Administration in power has the odds of almost two to one in a popular election. There is not even a village of our broad country in which the President has not an active political agent, a local manager of the political affairs of his Administration, either for his own reelection or the candidate nominated by his party to succeed him. And this agent must have an unenlaid party record, or the axe of the Executive guillotine removes his official head without even saying "by your leave," or consulting in the least degree the will of the people. But, sir, when the central Government takes the system of chattel slavery under its especial protection; when it declares that every rood of land in our broad territories, stretching away to the Pacific ocean, is, by the Constitution, the legal abode of the chattel system, and that the central Government will enforce that system at the point of Federal bayonets, it is time that the increasing millions of Northern freemen should investigate and decide for themselves this new interpretation. It at one blow nationalizes the chattel system, hovers it under the wing of our emblematic bird, shielding and defending it with its angry beak. At the same time, it annihilates all that makes the property valuable to Northern laborers.

If a corrupt partisan Administration usurps to itself the power of treading upon new ground, no patriot is far-sighted enough to discover the final results of that first misguided step. Already an alarmed North feels about the pillars and strong columns which support its independent State sovereignties, to discover the solidity



of their foundations. Steadily increasing in strength as a central power, you are also as steadily trenching upon State rights, and you will yet claim the right to drive your cuffed slaves through the very temples of Freedom, by the decision and with the aid of the central Government. This prophecy may be esteemed a madness; but there are children now born in the North who will live to witness the attempt. When that time comes, your Republic will become an Empire, your central Government as Paris is to France, and your elected President an Emperor. It cannot be reached but by revolution and blood; but both may be averted by nipping in the bud this tendency to centralization—this encroachment upon the rights of the free States of this Union.

It is not for the interest of the North to extend the area of Slavery, for another reason. Your chattel system conflicts with the true interest of our Northern laborer in almost all respects. We have felt the Slavery Power pressing like an incubus upon us. You dictate the tariff policy of the nation, and, by owning your own laborers, do not hesitate to attempt to enforce a free-trade policy, which places the labor of our free mechanics upon a level with the pauper labor of Europe. At your will, the governmental screws are unloosed, or turned until the cry of reduction of wages rings through all the manufactories and artisans' shops of the North, or else close their doors and stop the hum of industry.

No hired pauper of Europe, even though his remuneration for daily labor is but a scanty pittance, can compete with the owners of the human labor machine in the South. You can restrict his daily allowance to the stand-point of actual necessity. You can compel him under the lash to labor for a number of hours per day, which, if forced upon the paupers of Europe, would revolutionize every nation upon the face of that continent. You do not need protection for such labor, and self-interest alone leads you to the formation of a tariff that will, with the least possible addition essential to the carrying on of our Government, place in your hands the product of their industry at the lowest possible price. But, sir, the free labor of the North will never consent to take rank either with the paupers of Europe or the slaves of the South. It seeks at the hands of a paternal Government protection from both. Just so fast as this slave system expands itself, in the ratio with which it fills your Congressional Halls, it diminishes the chances for that protection which American industry and capital demand. I do not wonder, sir, that Connecticut Democracy, cheek by jowl with the South in her slave propagandism, and in striking down the dignity and rights of free labor, stands up in this Hall, and begs of its Southern coadjutors to stifle the utterance of their "mud-sill" sentiments, because such utterances ring the death-knell of the party.

But there is another and higher reason than all, which will control my vote upon this question, because it has been, is now, and I trust always will be, a cardinal principle of my political life. I do not, cannot, will not, acknowledge man's right of property in man. Born and educated amid the free institutions of the old Commonwealth of Connecticut, I was taught their justice and sanctity. The study of my later years has but strengthened and established my early convictions. No doctrine is so abhorrent to me, sir, as that so often proclaimed in this Hall, that one man has a social, political, moral, nay, sir, a Divine right, to hold as property the living body of his fellow-man. It saps the foundation of all rights invested in man by a high Creator. It stands between an eternal Ruler and the accountable subject. It claims the power, and exercises it, of making nugatory Divine commands. This it does by holding the marriage covenant subject to the caprices of fortune and the dictum of another's will, when the Divine Authority has declared it permanent. It claims the power, and exercises it, of shutting up the immortal mind in the prison-house of ignorance, and forbids the application of its God-given powers in fitting itself for the study of that Book by whose laws it must finally be judged, and through whose pages alone it can discover the moral beauties of the world's great Redeemer. It claims and exercises the right of selling in the public shambles the child of another's loins, scattering families, without their consent, to the extremes of its spreading dominions. It abrogates nature's first law of self defence. In a word, it lays its iron hand upon "the image of God" in man, and by one fell legal blow makes him a chattel, a thing, a beast of burden, an article of merchandise in the markets of the country.

Sir, I cannot acknowledge the existence of that right thus to transform a fellow man, anywhere on this vast globe of ours, much less in my own native country, the boasted "land of the free, and the home of the brave." For that reason, also, I shall vote against this Lecompton Constitution. I do not hold any party, in my own State or elsewhere, responsible for the doctrine set forth in this last reason for my vote against Lecompton. It will be my highest pleasure to co-operate with any man differing with me on this fundamental question in any effort to strangle this fraudulent attempt to impose a Constitution upon an unwilling people in Kansas. Whatever may be the result of this local struggle, for myself and my constituents, I pledge you, that there will be no cessation of effort until this Government is brought back to its early practice, and a practical infidelity shall give place to the broad principles of a genuine Christianity, which was the glory of its noble founders.

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RUELL & BLANCHARD, PRINTERS.  
1858.